

THE Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION SINCE 1877

BRIEFS

**BRIT TEACHERS
PUSHING LGBT**

BRITAIN (BP) — Britain's largest teachers union thinks toddlers should be included in expanded compulsory LGBT education programs. The National Union of Teachers (NUT) passed a motion April 17 calling on British lawmakers to campaign for compulsory sex education classes and the "promotion of LGBT+ matters for all schools from nursery throughout all phases of state education," according to The Times of London. The group decried the current "lack of policies which promote LGBT+ within schools," causing a "significant negative impact" on the well-being of homosexual and transgender students and teachers.

GUIDESTONE OFFERS WELLNESS SCREENS

PHOENIX (BP)— Guidestone Financial Resources will make available its popular Wellness Center June 12-14 at the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention—but this year rather than having participants move around, the Wellness Center will offer one-stop biometric readings. Messengers can take advantage of the free services that are valued at \$150. The Center will offer blood-based screenings for cholesterol and glucose. For best results, fast at least the previous 12 hours. Participants will receive a personalized report to take home to family doctors.

FACULTY VOTE UPSETS LEADERS

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — Sanford University faculty's approval of a pro-homosexual student group could have "serious implications... for the relationship" between the university and the Alabama Baptist State Convention, according to a joint statement by the convention's president and the executive director of its State Board of Missions. The full faculty voted April 27 to recommend Sanford. Together, a student organization that "will provide a forum for SU students who want to discuss topics relating to sexual orientation and gender identity," according to the Sanford website.

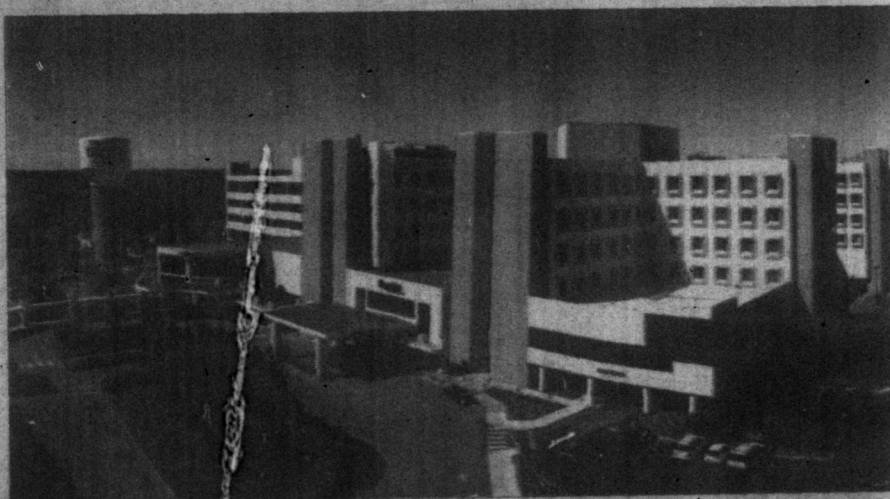
Baptist health care systems set merger

Union one of largest non-profit US systems

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

Mississippi Baptist Health Systems (MBHS) in Jackson and Baptist Memorial Health Care (BMHC) in Memphis announced on May 1 the completion of a merger between the two regional health care giants, making the new operation one of the largest not-for-profit health care systems in the United States.

"Everyone in the communities we serve will benefit from our alignment with an organization that shares our commitment to both Christian values and quality health care," said Chris Anderson, MBHS president and chief operating officer. "Importantly, our ability to be competitive in a health care environment that is increasingly complex, competitive, and challenging will be significantly enhanced," he said. "Now, as part of Baptist Memorial — with shared knowledge, access to Baptist OneCare, and the many ad-

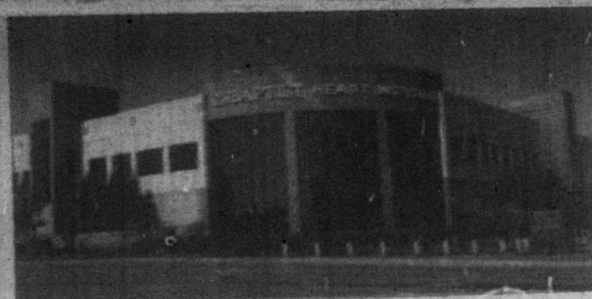


MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST HEALTH SYSTEMS, JACKSON



ANDERSON LITTLE

ditional resources available — we will become even stronger and better equipped to provide high quality services for many years to come."



BAPTIST MEMORIAL HEALTH CARE, MEMPHIS

see MERGER on p. 6

Fatal storm mobilizes MS Baptists



BETHLEHEM CHURCH, MONTGOMERY/CARROLL
ASSOCIATION.

NASHVILLE (BP and local reports) — Southern Baptists are assessing damage and readying help in Mississippi and four other states where weekend tornadoes and floods killed at least 15 people and injured dozens, North American Mission Board (NAMB) executive Mickey Caison told Baptist Press.

At least two people were killed in Mississippi, a man in Holmes County and a seven-year-old boy in Rankin County. Details were not immediately available.

Southern Baptist Disaster Relief (SBDRL) directors in Arkansas, Illinois, Mississippi, Missouri, and Texas have sent assessment teams to communities damaged by tornadoes and flooding April 29-30, said Caison, NAMB executive director of disaster relief.

see STORM on p. 6

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From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS, ^{OP}

Eyes wide open

Gov. Bryant has no reason to keep us in the dark about the special session. So reads the headline of the lead editorial in the April 30 issue of the Sun Herald newspaper in Gulfport. Maybe so, maybe not. One thing is for certain — he bears watching as he exercises the constitutional power of his office to assemble the agenda for the June 5 special legislative session he has called.

Why? After his passionate campaign failed to ram a lottery bill through the recently-ended 2017 regular session of the Mississippi Legislature, anti-lottery forces shouldn't be surprised if the issue is dramatically resurrected for the special session.

The likely primary purpose of the special session is funding for the Mississippi Department of Transportation. Legislators did not get their job done when they went home and left that critical state agency without a budget for the coming fiscal year. With the structural maintenance of our present state roadways and construction of new transportation projects hanging in the balance, that is an indisputably good reason to call a special session.

However, the Governor has the legal right to control the agenda for special sessions. He and governors in our past have often included in special session agendas what could be termed "housekeeping" items that also needed to be cleared up while the Legislature was in town.

The scary part is that Governor Bryant has the authority to include the lottery in the agenda if he so chooses.

The Sun Herald editorial board is primarily concerned with how the state's share of the BP/Deepwater Horizon settlement will be allotted. They are calling on the money to be spent on the Mississippi Gulf Coast where the disastrous oil spill's effects were suffered, rather than have the settlement absorbed into the state's general budget or raided by legislators for other purposes as was the tobacco settlement of several years back.

The governor should not keep us in suspense. We don't want to see BP on this special session agenda at the last moment... And the risk that the \$100 million the state has received as part of a \$750 million settlement for economic

damages could be hijacked is too great," the editorial warns.

Like our friends on the Coast who are speaking up about a matter important to their future, those of us who oppose a state lottery should be sounding a clarion call now to ensure that issue stays off the special session agenda. Underhanded tactics have already been employed in an attempt to sneak a lottery bill through the Legislature and onto the desk of our willing governor.

Rep. Mark Baker of Brandon used his power as a committee chairman in the 2017 regular session to strip a completely unrelated bill of its contents and insert enabling language for a lottery. In doing so, he was able to skip over several important steps in the process that would have led to debate and early exposure of pro-lottery legislators.

To his credit, House Speaker Philip Gunn ruled Baker's end run could not go forward.

Governor Bryant, who is outspoken about his Christian faith, deserves our gratitude for signing HB 1523, which will shield the religious liberties of the state's citizens by protecting them when they decline to become involved in the circus atmosphere of the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) political movement. That law is currently under attack in the federal court system by pro-LGBT activists.

Governor Bryant's record on gambling is mixed at best, having approved the corrosive sports fantasy gambling move into Mississippi and now pushing for a lottery, but he has also fought and won battles with the state's gambling/political complex over other matters.

Gov. Bryant has been on the right side of many other social, moral, and ethical issues, but he is simply wrong about the lottery. We need to be sure he knows that, and to leave the lottery out of the special session. He may be contacted via e-mail at governorbryant.ms.gov/Pages/Contact.aspx, or by calling (601) 359-3150. Mailing address is P.O. Box 139, Jackson, MS 39205-0139.

Respectfully point out that our ashamedly gambling-saturated state does not need another road to ruin for so many individuals and families. Like always, if we don't get involved we will all get the government we deserve.

You are your social media

We've all done it. When somebody does something wrong, we take to Facebook with a comment or criticism. When a controversial issue or event breaks into the news, we throw in our two cents on Twitter.

We have come to a place where our first impulse is to post something on social media. For many people, this can be a drive-by comment. For other people, it can be arguing back and forth online with other people. For some, it comes in the form of a lengthy soap box moment to let people to know our thoughts and opinions.

For whatever reason, people these days (including Christians) have become slow to listen, quick to speak, and quick to anger which is the very opposite of the scriptural command (James 1:19).

What if, instead of posting every time controversy rears its head, we did the following?

Pray, don't post

The next time you see trouble brewing on social media and feel the impulse to post, channel that into your cue to pray. Instead of offering up your thoughts and opinions to your social media audience who may or may not care, offer up those thoughts to the Lord and ask God to intervene in the situation.

The next time you feel the need to tee off, hit your knees in prayer. The famous Baptist preacher Charles Spurgeon was reported to have said, "On his knees, the believer is invincible." In each era, Christians are tempted to rely on worldly tools like politics and protest in place of prayer. Yet, if we are to be an effective witness this must change.

Listen, don't speak

After you have prayed, take some time to listen to what others are saying. Take note of who is saying what. Take note of who is not saying anything. Also, listen to the quiet voices — not only the loudest.



Guest opinion
with Brian Hobbs

The great British statesman Edmund Burke once said that we should not think the loudly chirping crickets are the mightiest animal in the prairie just because they make more noise than the great cattle quietly chewing their cud. Burke's point was simple: Those who speak most often and most loudly are often the same people whose opinions are dismissed most quickly.

Love, don't despise

Christian author C.S. Lewis once said he thought the most unpopular Christian views related to sexual purity. After further consideration, though, Lewis realized that Christ's command to "Love your enemies" is the most unpopular.

Only in the Christian faith are we told to love those who oppose us, who may even hate us. If people looked at your social media feed, would they think you love your enemies? If not, it's time to change the tone.

In the end, social media like Facebook and Twitter are simply extensions of our own personality and character. Christians have an excellent opportunity to engage with their neighbors online. If we pray, listen, and love more, the world will notice the difference.

Hobbs is editor of *The Baptist Messenger* (baptistmessenger.com), news journal of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma in which this article first appeared. It appears here courtesy of Baptist Press. Edited for style and clarity.

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Pastors at odds on use of capital punishment

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP and local reports) — With death penalty cases making headlines in Arkansas, California, and Alabama, pastors have expressed differing views on capital punishment while underscoring the "enormous complexity" of the issue.

In Arkansas, three convicted murderers. Originally, the state sought to execute eight inmates before a sedative used in its lethal injection process expired at the end of the month. Four of the executions are on hold as inmates' final appeals are considered.

California, which has not executed anyone in 11 years, "could come close to resuming executions in the next year," according to an Associated Press report.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Supreme Court heard oral arguments April 24 in an Alabama death row case hinging on whether the state must provide defendants with mental health experts to assist in their defenses.

Amid the flurry of capital punishment news, Arkansas pastor and former Southern Baptist Convention president Ronnie Floyd issued a blog post April 24 noting, "10 biblical realities to consider about capital punishment." Among his arguments:

■ "According to Scripture, capital punishment is permissible if the evidence about the accused is more than clear, overwhelming, and just (Genesis 9:6; Romans 13:4)."

■ "The justice system must be equitable and just regardless of race, class, or culture. (Deuteronomy 19:15; Deuteronomy 1:17; Leviticus 19:14)."

■ "Every person should always be treated with the highest dignity, including those who receive capital punishment, by administering it in the most benevolent way possible (Genesis 1:27)."

■ "Eternal salvation is possible for anyone awaiting capital punishment, through their personal repentance from sin and faith in Jesus Christ and Him alone (Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 10:9-13)."

The "simplicity and clarity" of a brief list of principles "does not diminish the enormous complexity of this issue," wrote Floyd, senior pastor of multi-campus Cross Church in northwest Arkansas. "As we wrestle through this issue, we do so with humility and honesty, not with arrogance or judgment toward anyone."

"As we wrestle through this issue, we do so with humility and honesty, not with arrogance or judgment toward anyone."

Ronnie Floyd

Arkansas pastor and former Southern Baptist Convention president

Speculation that California could resume executions was prompted by an approaching court-ordered deadline for corrections officials to submit revised lethal injection rules to state regulators. The deadline was imposed in response to a request by families of murder victims angered at California's three-year delay in issuing revisions and the resultant delay in executions, according to Associated Press (AP).

The proposed rules call for lethal drugs to be administered a maximum of five times in 10-minute intervals. If an inmate is still alive after five lethal doses, his or her execution will be halted and medical assistance summoned, AP reported.

In a related case, the California Supreme Court is scheduled to rule by August on challenges to a 2016 ballot initiative in which voters called for speeding up the death penalty process by a 51% majority.

Miguel Rodriguez, director of Gateway Seminary's North Bay School of Theology for inmates at California's San Quentin State Prison, told Baptist Press the restart of executions would be a "negative" development. San Quentin, located some eight miles north of Gateway's former main campus in Mill Valley, Ca., is the site of California's death chamber.

Gateway Seminary, now situated in suburban Los Angeles, is the Southern Baptist Convention's former Golden Gate Seminary when it was located across the Golden Gate Bridge from San Francisco in Mill Valley.

"The biblical argument is based on the Old Testament largely," said Rodriguez, pastor of Lincoln Hill Community Church in San Rafael, Ca. Jesus "challenged" the "eye for eye" approach to justice and urged His followers to respond "to violence in a non-violent way," he argues.

While "the state is the instrument of God in carrying out justice," Rodriguez said, referencing Romans 13:4, some calls for capital punishment seem to be based on "vengeance rather than justice." Executing criminals will not yield "restorative justice," he said.

At oral arguments in the Alabama case, the U.S. Supreme Court's nine justices appeared closely divided," according to NPR, with Justice Anthony Kennedy appearing "likely to cast the deciding vote."

At issue is whether James McWilliams, a convicted murderer with alleged mental health challenges, was entitled to his own psychiatric expert at sentencing or whether a single court-appointed mental health expert could provide evidence and conclusions for both sides.

Justice Stephen Breyer of the court's liberal bloc argued McWilliams "certainly did not get" the legal help required by law while Justice Neil Gorsuch of the court's conservative wing suggested requiring a separate state-appointed defense expert could lead to a slippery slope of requirements for other types of expert witnesses, NPR reported.

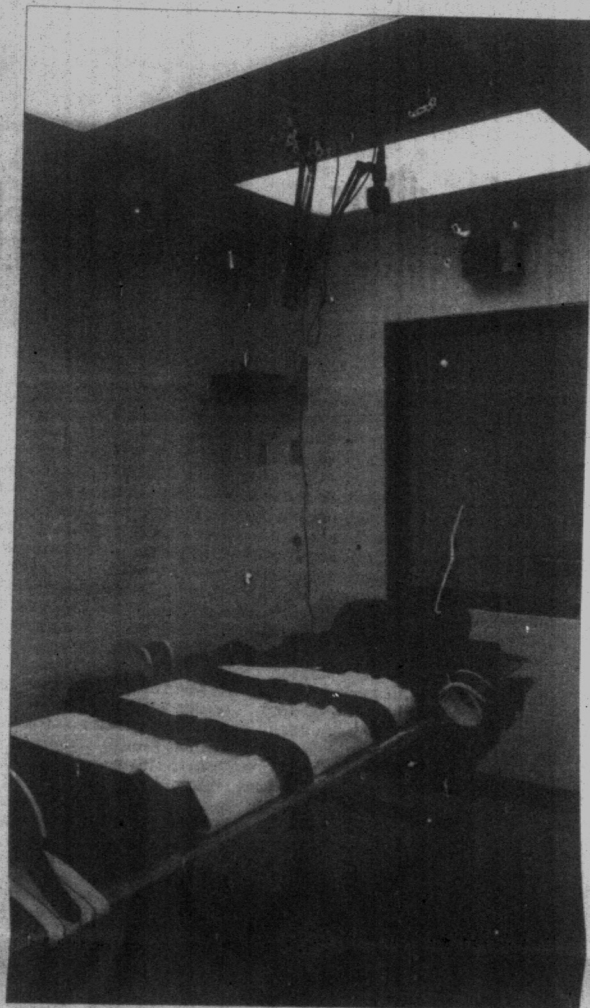
Since McWilliams sentencing, Alabama has begun assisting defendants with mental health experts, but the state argued his sentence need not be overturned, according to NPR.

Mississippi Governor Phil Bryant, a Republican, on April 5 signed House Bill 638 that revises death penalty procedures to include several options for carrying out capital punishment. The first option is for a specified drug combination. If not available, the second option is nitrogen hypoxia, or suffocation by nitrogen gas.

If nitrogen hypoxia is not available, the third option is electrocution. If that is unavailable, the fourth option is firing squad.

Messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention's 2000 annual meeting "urge[d]" that capital punishment be administered only when the pursuit of truth and justice result in clear and overwhelming evidence of guilt.

The resolution said capital punishment is "a legitimate form of punishment for those guilty of murder or treasonous acts that result in death" and called for "vigilance, justice, and equality in the criminal justice system."



STANDING BY

The lethal injection room at Parchman Prison in the Mississippi Delta silently awaits its next use. The last lethal injection execution in the room was Gary Carl Simmons Jr., who was put to death on June 20, 2012, for the Jackson County dismemberment of Jeffery Wolfe in 1996, in a drug deal gone bad. (Photo courtesy of Mississippi Department of Corrections)

Everybody is busy! It doesn't matter how young or old you are; what trade, occupation or profession in which you work; whatever gender, race, or religion you happen to be. Everybody is busy! Now for those of you who may want to disagree and who think you know somebody who is not busy at all, allow me to point out that while you may not think they are busy, they think they are busy. There are people who are busy trying to look busy, and there are people who are busy trying not to be busy. In the midst of it all, though, there are busy folks.

Everywhere you look, folks are busy. The first grader on his or her way to the first day in class is pushed by all of the preparation, traffic, and the other people involved in getting there in an attempt to beat the bell. The businessman, the banker, the school teacher, the attorney, the air conditioner repairman, the plumber, the store owner, the dentist, the nurse, the retiree, and everybody else have places to go, things to do, people to see, and are usually in a hurry to get there.

That is why I was so surprised on a pre-dawn morning in the summer as I was out finishing my walk. Not far from me, a car came to a sudden stop in the middle of the road. The person turned on the emergency flashers, got out of his car, and began to run. The man ran about 50 yards, and I wondered what in the world was happening. I recognized him as a doctor who lived in our area, and wondered to what kind of emergency he was responding. Turns out he was rushing back down the road to pick up a turtle. He carried the turtle across the road and gently put him in a flower bed, then rushed back to his car and away he went.

I wondered how busy his day was going to be. How many patients were waiting on him, and how many needs in people's lives would be clamor-



With Jim Furrut, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

Pausing to Care

ing for attention? Yet in the rush of the pre-dawn light, he paused 30-60 seconds to help an innocent little turtle get out of the way of the traffic that would soon be on the road. I have often been fascinated not so much by what people do but what they do on the way to what they are going to do.

Do you recall that day when Jesus got word from the house of Jairus that his daughter was sick and apparently near death (Mark 5)? Jairus wanted Jesus to come because he believed Jesus could make a difference. As Jesus made His way toward the man's home, the crowds grew. No doubt, the crowd was wondering what spectacular thing Jesus was going to do. As Jesus and His disciples pressed on trying to get to the place where He was going to meet a need, something strange happened. He was encircled by people. You can imagine the crowd pushing, pulling, wanting to get a look at Jesus and wanting to be close if something unusual actually happened.

In that crowd was a desperate woman. For 12 years, she had suffered with an ailment and no one could help her. She had spent all of her money looking for a remedy and none was

found. She thought if she could just touch Jesus, He could help. Moving along with the crowd and reaching out as far as she could, she touched the hem of His garment and was instantly healed. Scripture says that instantly, the power and strength of God flowed from Jesus into her life. Jesus stopped and asked, "Who touched me?" The disciples recognized that everybody was touching Him and pointed out the obvious. Jesus said again, "Someone touched me." The woman sheepishly stepped forward and admitted, "I did."

Jesus was not angry with her. He just wanted to bless her. He paused to care. How many times a day, in our busy comings and goings as we are trying to get somewhere and do something really urgent and important, do we miss pausing to care for someone we may not even know? Take a moment to think about your caring pauses.

Stop and help someone that no one else sees. I could not see the turtle in the road from where I was and no one could see the dilemma in the woman's life from where they were, but someone who did see paused to help. Too many times, we may see what needs to be done and even bother

to think and maybe even ask, "Why doesn't somebody do something about that?" Well, maybe somebody should and maybe that somebody is your body. If you see it, help!

Another thought I would pass along, and maybe you can pass along, is that you can stop and help someone who cannot help you in return. The turtle could not respond and neither could the woman who touched the hem of Jesus' garment. There are folks around you that you can help and bless who cannot do anything for you. That's fine, but you can do something for them. If the truth be known, the more help we give like that, the closer we may be to the cross of Jesus.

One final thought about pausing to care is to pause and help someone in danger. I know most of us have an aversion to interfering in someone's life, sticking our noses somewhere our noses should not be, or intervening in some kind of crisis. I understand that, but when you see a turtle in danger of being crushed and you don't want to pause 30 seconds, multiply that 10,000 times over and consider pausing to care for a precious young person whose life is getting all twisted up and is about to run into the ditch or be run over by our culture. How much more valuable are they than any little creature crossing the road? Maybe you can pause to help someone facing the end of life's journey and there is no one else there to care.

The Psalmist says God promised He will walk with us through the valley of the shadow of death (Psalm 23:4), but there are those who need you, or only a word from you, or just a moment of care from you. God help each one of us to pause long enough at least once a day to care and make a difference.

The author can be contacted at directions@mbcb.org.

Revivals & Homecomings

► **Green's Creek Church, Pentecost Revival**, May 7-10, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; May 11, 7 p.m.; Morris Allen, speaker; Kenny Keston, music; Mike Rountree, pastor.

► **Windsor Grove Church, Communion Homecoming**, May 7, 10 a.m.; The Kingmen Quartet, music.

► **Friendship Church, Georgia**, both sanctuaries, May 7, facility tours and videos during the Sunday School hour, 9:45 a.m., followed by worship and covered dish pot luck lunch; Robert E. Self, speaker; Tommy Gilson, music; banner pictures; staff and members encouraged to attend. Call (660) 428-4058 for more information.

► **Hamsey Church, Brookhaven Revival**, May 7-10, Sun., 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Gary Brown, speaker; Mike Seifried, music.

► **New Salem Church, No Call Creek Homecoming**, May 7, 10:30 a.m., followed by lunch; Tim Burroughs, speaker; Kenneth Gilmore, music.

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KHJ KN ZKHO KN EPDYLXJ LMZ AXFX

ZKJX ALPRX.

Clue: M = I

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: John 6:35

By Charles Marx, 1932-2004. © 2005

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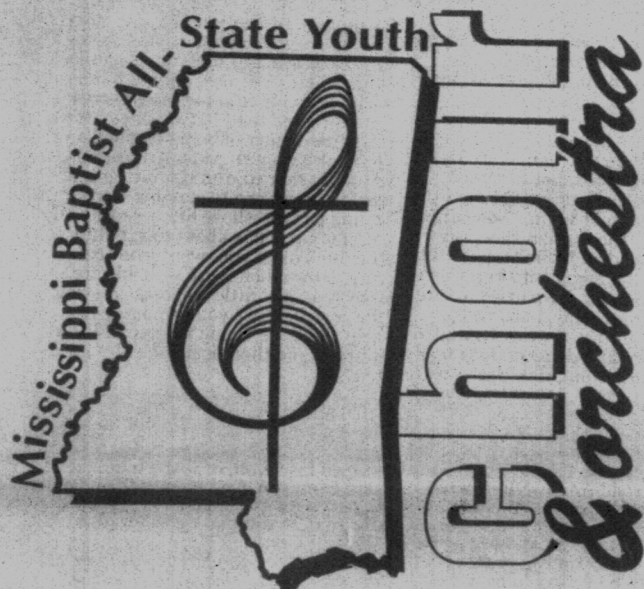
What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

May 4, 2017

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's **Communication Services**.



MBASYC&O CONCERT TOUR DATES

LOCATION CHANGE

*Wednesday, June 14, 2017
First Baptist Church, 6:30 p.m.
200 E. Monticello St.
Brookhaven, MS 39476
(601) 788-9607

Thursday, June 15, 2017
First Baptist Church, 6:30 p.m.
300 N Cleveland Ave.
Long Beach, MS 39560
(228) 864-2584

Friday, June 16, 2017
First Baptist Church, 6:30 p.m.
1108 Robb St.
Summit, MS 39666
(601) 248-6268

Saturday, June 17, 2017
Highland Colony Baptist Church, 6:00 p.m.
1200 Highland Colony Pkwy.
Ridgeland, MS 39157
(601) 856-4031

Sunday, June 18, 2017
First Baptist Church, 11:00 a.m.
402 N Van Buren St.
Carthage, MS 39051
(601) 267-4583

First Baptist Church, 6:00 p.m.
303 1st Ave.
Amory, MS 38821
(662) 256-7131

Monday, June 19, 2017
First Baptist Church, 6:30 p.m.
431 North State St.
Jackson, MS 39201
(601) 949-1900

2017 Senior Adult Day Retreats

Sr. Day Retreat I
May 16, 2017
12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Emmanuel Baptist Church
Grenada, MS

Sr. Day Retreat II
May 18, 2017
12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
West Ellisville Baptist Church
Ellisville, MS

Sr. Day Retreat III
May 23, 2017
12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Meadow Grove Baptist Church
Brandon, MS

Discipleship/Family Ministry
601-292-3284 | tpreson@mbcb.org



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July 18-22

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May 9

Meadow Grove BC, Brandon

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Johnny Rakestraw
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Church Financial Compliance
Ministerial Financial Compliance
IRS Financial Compliance

SCHEDULE:

Friday
Check in - 4:00-5:00 p.m.
Dinner - 5:30 p.m.
First Session - 6:30 p.m.
Saturday
Breakfast - 7:00-8:00 a.m.
First Session - 8:00 a.m.
Conclusion - 12:30 p.m.

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of the State Auditor
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IRS Financial Compliance

For more information, contact Alicia Dungan at adungan@garaywa.org or 601-924-7034

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MINISTERS 2017 GOLF TOURNAMENT

MAY 8-9 LAKE CAROLINE GOLF CLUB
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Pray this day for...

May 5 - May 18, 2017

"praying at all times in the Spirit... To that end keep alert with perseverance, making supplication for all the saints..."

Ephesians 6:18 (ESV)

Pray for: **Daniel & Claudia Hood**, missionaries ministering to North American & Middle Eastern Peoples through church planting & evangelism.

Pray for: **Millard Jones**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through student evangelism.

Pray for: **Susan Jones**, missionary ministering to East Asian Peoples through student evangelism.

Pray for: **Timothy & Rebecca Lightsey**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through strategy coordination, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Robert Mooney**, missionary ministering to European Peoples through Strategy Coordination.

Pray for: **Stephen & Svetlana Parish**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through strategy coordination, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Kevin & Brenda Peacock**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through theological education, outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Eugenia & Tracy Putnam**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through church planting.

Pray for: **John & Deborah Royals**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through regional office support, church/home outreach evangelism.

Pray for: **Jonathan & Bethany Sharp**, missionaries ministering to European Peoples through church planting & community outreach/encounter.

Pray for: **George & Geraldine Smith**, missionaries ministering to Sub-Saharan African Peoples through church planting, church/home outreach & evangelism.

Pray for: **Thomas & Jenna Smith**, missionaries ministering to American Peoples through church planting & regional office support.

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AUGUST 19

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Encourage an MK with a card! To Be Sent June 16, 2017, by the WMU Office



PLEASE NOTE THE TIMING: Thank you for your love and support of MKs by sending Birthday cards! Because of the sending to other countries, there is a need to get cards sent a month ahead of birthday. As soon as the list is in the Baptist Record, please send the cards and not wait until a couple of weeks before the date of the birthday. It is good to give time to receive cards and then to mail them a month ahead of time to insure arrival around birthday. Again, thank you for being a blessing to so many with this ministry!
NOTE: Church members may send a package of cards together; cards do not have to be sent individually to the WMU. Individual cards do not need postage stamps when sent as a package to MS WMU.
FOR SECURITY, cards will be forwarded. Please send all to: BIRTHDAY WMU/MK Birthdays, PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39205.
Please include your return address on each card envelope. MKs and their parents may wish to send you an update or note of appreciation.

HOUSE TOPS

MS POSITIONS

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DREW BAPTIST CHURCH IS SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL PASTOR— Please email resume to: drawbaptistchurch@gmail.com or U S mail to Drew Baptist Church, 139-S Church St., Drew, MS 38737.

ROCKY POINT BAPTIST CHURCH, CARTHAGE, MS, IN LEAKE COUNTY IS CURRENTLY ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR FULL-TIME PASTOR. Please send resumes to Dian Grundy, 3136 Rocky Point Rd., Carthage, Ms., 39051

SOUTHWAY BAPTIST CHURCH IN BROOKHAVEN, MS IS ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR MINISTER OF YOUTH. Please email resumes to southwaybaptist@yahoo.com

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RAYMOND ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH IN JACKSON IS CURRENTLY ACCEPTING RESUMES FOR A PASTOR. Resumes can be sent to RRBC, 4622 Raymond Road, Jackson MS 39212, ATTN: Pastor Search committee or e-mail resumes to rrbcpastorsearch17@gmail.com.

CLASSIFIEDS

LEVY CHURCH, NORTH LITTLE ROCK, AR, SEEKS A WORSHIP PASTOR. Resumes/inquiries may be sent to: stevenlth@levybaptist.com

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NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH FOXWORTH HAS SOME PULPIT FURNITURE THEY WOULD LIKE TO DONATE to a church that is in need of it. For more information contact the church office Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at 601-738-6511.

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Southwestern profs' hip hop parody brings condemnation

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP and local reports) — Southwestern Seminary in Ft. Worth has been placed in the position of "deeply" apologizing for a photograph posted by faculty members on social media featuring the Southern Baptist Convention's chief parliamentarian displaying a handgun with a laser sight attached while dressed like a stereotypical minority.

The photo in question, which has been deleted from Twitter, appeared to depict five Anglo Southwestern School of Preaching professors dressed in bandannas, sideways baseball caps, gold chains and other hip hop attire common to African American or Hispanic "gangsters."

Barry McCarty, the Southern Baptist Convention's chief parliamentarian who also teaches at Southwestern, appears to be only person holding a handgun. He is a former Church of Christ minister who converted to Southern Baptist in 2015 around the time he was offered the Southwestern job.

Above them was written, "Notorious S.o.P." [School of Preaching], an apparent parody of the name of violent rapper The Notorious B.I.G. who was himself murdered in a 1997 Los Angeles drive-by shooting.

The other four faculty members in the photo are David Allen, dean of the School of Preaching; Kyle Walker, vice president for student services; Deron Biles, professor of pastoral ministries and preaching; and Matthew McKellar, associate professor of preaching.

Southwestern President Paige Patterson called the photo "a moment of bad judgment" and promised to "redouble our efforts to put an

end to any form of racism on this campus."

A young preaching professor "does rap as a hobby," Patterson said in a statement released to Baptist Press on April 26. "He preached a sermon recently in chapel in which he included a section of rap. I thought that it was great, and the students seemed responsive to it. He has since accepted a pastorate and, as part of his departure, his fellow profes-

sors wanted to awaken memories and in so doing to tease him. That is par for the course around here.

"The president encourages our people to laugh at each other rather than to risk taking ourselves too seriously [but, as all members of the preaching faculty have acknowledged, this was a mistake, and one for which we deeply apologize.

"Sometimes, Anglo Americans do not recognize the degree that racism has crept into our lives. Such incidents are tragic but helpful to me in refocusing on the attempt to flush from my own system any remaining nuances of the racist past of our own country.

"Just as important, my own sensitivity to the corporate and individual hurts of a people group abused by generations of oppressors needs to be constantly challenged."

The departing faculty member referenced by Patterson is Vern Charette, pastor of Trinity Church in Yukon, Ok. A screen capture published by Faithfully Magazine indicates Charette tweeted April 25 that his colleagues were "all true OG's," an acronym for "original gangsters."

The tweet no longer appears on Charette's Twitter feed.

Southwestern tweeted April 25, "An offensive tweet was posted to one of our faculty members' personal Twitter handles. We have asked that the tweet be removed."

Barry McCarty
@barrymccarty

The Notorious School of Preaching faculty's going away portrait for @Vern_Charette. @swbts



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A conference especially designed for youth, children and recreation leaders.

Monday, May 22nd - Colonial Heights BC, Ridgeland

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Wednesday, May 24th - FBC New Albany

10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Register at tinyurl.com/yourrep2017

MERGER

cont. from p. 1

According to its web site, Baptist OneCare® is a fully integrated electronic health record powered by Epic Systems that digitizes patient files; gives patients access their records anywhere, anytime; re-fills prescriptions; makes doctor's appointments from any computer or mobile device; and provides remote consults with doctors' offices.

For providers, the web site states, Baptist OneCare is a "seamless continuum of care" for treatment, imaging, lab work, and referral services.

Jason Little, BMHC president and chief executive officer, said at a May 1 press conference the last step toward the merger's completion, a "shared mission agreement," was completed in late April and allowed the merger to close.

Both systems are Christian-based. BMHC is mutually owned by the state Baptist conventions of Mississippi, Tennessee, and Arkansas. MBHS is solely owned by the Mississippi Baptist Baptist Convention.

Anderson pointed out at the press conference there is no geographic overlap in the service areas of the two operations, and there are presently no plans for job layoffs. Little added that MBHS employees will "stay in their roles."

As a result of the merger, BMHC will become the largest health care provider in the Mid-South and the largest health care system in Mississippi. The merged system will be the fourth largest employer in Mississippi and serve every county in the state.

The systems began discussing the possibility of a merger in September 2016. Since then,

"By combining our resources, we can invest more heavily in our team members, facilities, and equipment, which will result in greater access to new technologies, best practices, and medical specialists."

Jason Little

BMHC president and chief executive officer

the Federal Trade Commission in Washington, D.C. has approved the merger.

"This merger will have a significant impact on health care and our communities," Little said. "By combining our resources, we can invest more heavily in our team members, facilities, and equipment, which will result in greater access to new technologies, best practices, and medical specialists."

"Ultimately, this merger is about elevating and expanding the care we provide to our communities in Mississippi and beyond."

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board in Jackson, said, "For more than a century both BMHC in Memphis and MBHS in Jackson have been leaders in being an extension of the healing ministry of Christ. Both of these outstanding hospitals have been a part of the Mississippi Baptist Convention and have served people all across our state."

"The union of the two will serve to help provide an even better health care system for people across Mississippi. More than just a corporate

merger, it is a partnership of like faith and vision to serve the communities in the name of Christ.

"In a day when so many aspects of health care seem to be in crisis, this step could make the Baptist name in health care not only bigger but better."

MBHS was started in Jackson in 1911 and was the city's first hospital. BMHC was started in 1912 with one hospital in downtown Memphis.

MBHS is the parent company of Baptist Medical Centers in Jackson, Kosciusko, Carthage, and Yazoo City, along with a number of related health care services and programs throughout central Mississippi.

MBHS treats patients from all 82 Mississippi counties and all 50 states. Its medical staff includes approximately 600 board-certified physicians representing more than 60 medical specialties and more than 3,700 health care professionals. MBHS will manage 21,500 admissions, 194,000 clinic visits, and more than 100,000 emergency department visits this year.

BMHC comprises 17 affiliated hospitals in west Tennessee, north Mississippi and east Arkansas; more than 4,000 affiliated physicians; Baptist Medical Group, a multispecialty physician group with more than 500 providers; home, hospice, and psychiatric care; minor medical centers and clinics; a network of surgery, rehabilitation, and other outpatient centers; and an education system highlighted by the Baptist College of Health Sciences in Memphis.

BMHC is scheduled to open a new \$300 million hospital in Oxford later this year.

For more information, visit baptistgrowth.org.

STORM

cont. from p. 1

Don Gann, director of Men's Ministry and disaster relief coordinator at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board in Jackson, said assessments have concluded in Montgomery, Holmes, and Adams Counties.

"Trained chainsaw teams will be mobilized to those areas to assist with clean up," Gann said. Mobilizations so far include:

■ Carroll/Montgomery Association in Winona. Headquarters: Kilmichael Church, Kilmichael. Chainsaw teams from Carroll/Montgomery Association, Benton/Dipah Association in Ripley, and Webster Association in Eupora.

■ Adams/Union Association in Natchez. Headquarters: Highland Church, Natchez. Chainsaw teams from Calhoun Association in Calhoun City and one other team to be announced.

■ Holmes Association in Lexington. Headquarters: First Church, Durant. Chainsaw teams from Attala Association in Kosciusko and one other team to be announced.

"These teams will be coming in one day at a time," Gann said.

Bethlehem Church in Carroll/Montgomery Association near Winona was heavily damaged during the storm, Gann said. No estimates were available at press time.

Both the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention and the Texas Baptist Men (TBM) of the Baptist General Convention of

Texas are assessing damage in that state, where CNN reported at least four deaths and 49 injuries caused by four tornadoes, one about a mile wide.

More than 5,000 homes were in the monster storm's path, Canton Mayor Lou Ann Everett told CNN.

Arkansas suffered at least five deaths, the most of any state affected. Two children, a four-year-old and an 18-month-old, were swept away by flood waters and were still missing May 1, Madison County Sheriff Rick Evans told CNN.

Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson declared a state of emergency April 30. Other death counts to date include two each in Mississippi, Missouri, and Tennessee, the result of flooding and heavy winds.

TBM is determining needs in hard-hit Canton and Van Zandt County today. TBM Disaster Relief Vice President Ralph Rogers told BP.

"We have had assessors out in the Canton area which was where a majority of the damage was with the tornadoes," Rogers said. "A lot of the damage was commercial property and then a lot of rural, out in the country, and no houses. ... Right now we haven't gotten a lot of response of damage to personal property."

The TBM will likely deploy chainsaw and tarp units as needs are properly assessed, Rogers said. "It's still fairly early and we don't really know how much we need to respond until we get through with the assessment phase."

Need a light?

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need You. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)
If you make a decision for Christ today, contact a local Southern Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

Submission Guidelines

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published.

Preferred method: news may be submitted electronically to the e-mail address below, and must be included in the message segment of an e-mail form. Secondary method: news may be typewritten or neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper and mailed. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone. Due to ever-present virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments in JPEG format are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs must be submitted electronically

via e-mail, as attachments in JPEG format. Hard copy photographs mailed through the postal service will not be accepted. Photographs must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. Photographs containing inappropriate gestures and objectionable clothing will not be published. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items that do not reproduce well on newsprint are generally not publishable.

There is no guarantee that news items and/or photographs will be published, and unsolicited material will not be acknowledged or returned. All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date. Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. These guidelines are not meant to be punitive.

Submit news to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 830, Jackson, MS 39205-0830. FAX: (601) 252-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org

Do I Have the Strength? • Matthew 26:36-46

As I studied Matthew 26:36-46 this week, I became aware of how much I am like Peter. I, too, can be hasty, prideful and tend to always have something to say. Not too many hours before today's scene Peter had professed he would never desert Jesus...even if everyone else did. Perhaps it was this show of bravado that opened a little door of opportunity for Satan's sifting. Peter's pride allowed him to believe he had it all together and therefore when Jesus specifically said to Peter, "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak," (Verse 41 NIV) Peter brushed it off as not necessary for him; how wrong he was.

The enemy knows when our energy is depleted and will use this to his benefit. Jesus and His disciples had had a busy and emotionally draining week. They were tired. Jesus was now about to engage the enemy face to face and knew He needed divine strength to endure. He asked those closest to Him to pray but they allowed the flesh to win and fell asleep. Instead of praying for strength, they slept. Instead of admitting their need for protection, they slept. Instead of spending time crying out to God for His guidance, they slept. Peter, James, and John's flesh was

weak; they would be fine if they could just rest. The Bible doesn't say this but perhaps they slept more soundly than ever before because the enemy had lured them into a false sense of security. I wonder when Jesus' woke them that last time and they saw the soldiers and Judas coming up the hill, how they felt. This was not what they were expecting and instead of being prepared, they were frightened. All the sleep in the world wouldn't help now.

Oh friend, this story should wake us up from our own sense of security and control that whispers we can handle life. The truth is, without the strength and guidance from the Holy Spirit we are completely worthless for the fight ahead. We must ask, "Are we praying or are we doing? Are we sleeping in our pews or falling on our knees?" We must be prepared and strengthened. These are uncertain days for the church in America. Some of you are personally facing horrible

life situations. The enemy knows that prayer is powerful and so he is luring us into worldly coping mechanisms. We either speak with confidence that we can handle life alone or we avoid all unpleasant situations...sleep. We discuss the world's problems with others rather than calling out for God's help. We should be on our faces begging for divine strength to combat the coming battles and temptations. Jesus is still begging His Bride to pray yet, like the disciples, we prefer sleep.

Prayer is powerful. It compels us to submit to the Father's plan.

Jesus' submission came after deep, passionate, heartfelt, serious praying. In Luke's gospel we read, "An angel from heaven appeared to Him and strengthened Him." (Luke 22:43) When we are struggling to submit we can receive strength from above to make the right choices but too often we pray to be delivered from instead of strengthened for.

In Paul's prayer for the church in Ephesus we read these words: "I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, would give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. I pray that the perception of your mind may be enlightened so you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the glorious riches of His inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of His power to us who believe, according to the working of His vast strength." Ephesians 1:17-19 (HCSB) Although the church was going through great trials, Paul did not pray that they be delivered. Paul's prayer for them was much like Jesus' prayer in the garden: that they would 1. Know God 2. Know His calling, 3. Know His vast strength.

Yes, I am very much like Peter. I want to believe that I can handle life but the truth is, I am weak. Perhaps you are too. Jesus' example to us through this garden prayer is that we can draw upon the same power He did and that we also will be strengthened to endure. The choice we have is to sleep or be victorious.

Grace is a Bible teacher, conference leader, and member of First Church, Clinton.



Explore the Bible
with Cyndi Grace

Life at Home • Ephesians 5:22-28; 6:1-3

The Gospel of Jesus Christ penetrates every corner of our lives, including our home life. In the passages before us this week, Paul lays out God's plan for a healthy, happy, holy family. It begins with husbands and wives believing in Christ for salvation and allowing their faith to shape their marriage and their parenting.

Sometimes as believers we tend to divvy up our lives into categories: work, religion, home, and leisure. The Bible knows no such divisions. Our faith in Christ is to permeate every area of life, including our relationships within our families.

One day, many years ago, I got a stark reminder of this from my wife. An elderly lady from the church had called. As her pastor I certainly wanted to minister to her in any way that I could. So I listened to the lady and then encouraged her with some kind words. When I said goodbye my wife, in her tender but firm way, said, "I wish you would speak to me that way." Ouch! That cut to the quick and convicted me on the spot.

As I said, that was many years ago and many life lessons ago. But the truth remains, we need to minister to our family members. Speak kindly to one another. Show affection and con-

cern. Value the worth of everyone in your family.

In Ephesians 5 verses 22-28 Paul shows us God's divine order for the home. Wives are to accept the authority the Lord has given their husbands to lead and protect them. Today the very thought of a woman submitting to her husband draws fire from many directions. But this push back does not change

God's plan for the home. We must follow God's order if we want our homes to be places of peace, harbors of hope, and living displays of grace.

If a Christian husband is yielded to the Lord, then there are rich blessings that will come to submissive wives and submissive children. They can live under his protection, thus giving them a sense of security. They can know if they follow their husbands or their fathers it will lead them closer to God. However, if he is not a Christ-centered man, it leaves a vacuum in the home

that often forces wives to take the lead. And praise God for godly wives and mothers who have stepped up because their husbands wouldn't.

There are many Christian wives and mothers who struggle with husbands who refuse to be men of God. What are they to do? The Apostle Peter answers that question and reaffirms Paul's writings here in Ephesians 5: "Wives, in

the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of

their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives" (1 Pet. 3:1-2 NIV).

Paul moves from wives to husbands and calls all men to love their spouses as Christ loved the church. In verses 25-28 Paul commands that men submit to the Lordship of Christ and love their mates unconditionally. Cover their weakness with grace, for love covers a multitude of sin. Bring out their

best qualities and never speak ill of them to others. This can be dangerous not only to your physical health, but even worse, to your marriage. Spouses that criticize one another in public are telegraphing that their marriages are indeed in trouble. It also shows they are not loving one another in the Lord. Jesus came to rub out our sin not rub it in. So husbands who practice agape love will be quick to forgive and slow to remember an offense.

Listen to some other words of Paul on what the love of Christ looks like when practiced: "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres" (1 Cor. 13:4-7 NIV).

Paul proceeds to discuss relationships between children and parents in Ephesians 6. He demands that children respect and honor their parents for it is the equivalent of obeying God.

Faith in Christ truly impacts life at home.

Burnett is pastor of Willow Pointe Church, Hattiesburg.

Bible Studies for Life
with Jim Burnett



Just for the Record



TUCKERS CROSSING CHURCH, LAUREL, celebrated Palm Sunday with families dressed in biblical dress portraying Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. Marshall and Karen Fitzgerald, children's directors; Eddie Bryant, pastor.



CENTRAL HILLS BAPTIST RETREAT recently hosted the Campers on Mission spring rally. The group is open to anyone interested in RVing and mission work.



MT. VERNON CHURCH, LIBERTY, licensed Paul M. Givens to the gospel ministry Apr. 2. He is a recent graduate of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Shown are pastor Jerry Causey and Givens.



LIBERTY HILL CHURCH, POPE, had their Young at Heart meeting Feb. 14. Shown is guest singer Wilton Neal and pastor Derrick Simmons.



The RA's of **GILLSBURG CHURCH, GILLSBURG**, participated in a bike-a-thon to raise funds for the Annie Armstrong offering. Shown, front, are Rowdy Williams and Colton Holmes; back, Kirby Williams, Beau Williams, Maddox Williams, Travis Williams, and Reed Morgan.



Preschool children from **CALVARY CHURCH, VICKSBURG**, are shown with Easter scenes they made.

NEW BETHEL CHURCH, CARROLL COUNTY, honored its high school graduates and recent college graduates Apr. 23. The church presented them with Jeremiah Study Bibles. Shown are high school graduates Megan Shelton and Madison Shelton, and college graduates Jessie Shelton and Amanda Shelton.



College News



BLUE MOUNTAIN COLLEGE installed its 2017-2018 student body association officers during recent ceremonies. Members of the new council include (seated, left to right) James Baker (Blue Mountain), president; Michelle Calderon (Lima, Peru); Nolan Bennett (Ripley), secretary/treasurer; McKayla Sheene (Pontotoc); Brandon Yates (Sharon, Tenn.), ministerial association representative; Savannah Thomas (Huntsville, Ala.), Modernian representative; (standing, left to right) Molly Woolworth (Selmer, Tenn.), Koinonia representative; Andria Barnes (Mooreville), Euzelian representative; President Barbara McMillin; Caroline McClure (Batesville), Euro-mian representative; Dalton Tudor (Tupelo), Berean representative; Monica Winningham (New Albany), commuter representative.

In other College News:

► **Mississippi College's "Beacon" magazine** received a first-place award from the Baptist Communicators Association at its annual spring meeting in Florida. MC officials accepted the honor at the BCA awards program in Fort Lauderdale in late April. The program is named for Wilmer C. Fields, retired vice president of public relations with the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee and former editor of *The Baptist Record*. Judges felt the 48-page "Beacon" was impressive enough to rank at the very top among BCA magazine publications across the USA. Founded in 1953, the BCA

consists of public relations professionals, graphic designers, photographers, marketing leaders and others at Baptist universities, seminaries and church-affiliated organizations nationwide.

► **Augustus L. (Leon) Collins** will address **Blue Mountain College's Class of 2017** on Saturday, May 6 at the 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Spring commencement ceremonies on the BMC campus. Collins is the Chief Executive Officer for MINACT Inc., a major workforce development, training and management corporation, that provides job training and educational services to more than 1800 students and spans across seven states.



BLUE MOUNTAIN COLLEGE recognizes the recipients of the James L. Travis Educational Trust. The Trust was established by the Ministerial Alumni of BMC to honor Travis who served as chair of the Department of Biblical and Associated Studies from 1960 to 1997. Eighteen students were awarded Travis Scholarships. Recipients are shown with Lucile Travis and Ronald Meeks, BMC professor of biblical studies.